

# Growing Healthy Families

VOLUME XIV, ISSUE 1

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## Spring is here!

Welcome to the spring edition of your WIC Newsletter! Spring is a wonderful time to begin fresh and we hope that you like the new look and new features of the WIC Newsletter.

We have added new contributing authors including Dr. Lewis First of Vermont Children's Hospital and Caroline Homan from City Market/Onion River Co-op in Burlington.

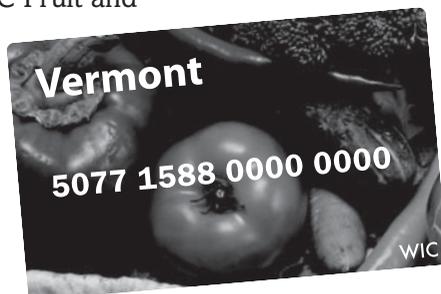
Spring is about renewal and new opportunities and we look forward to continuing to provide a fresh newsletter as each new season comes to Vermont.

### WIC tip:

When using your WIC Fruit and Veggie Card at the grocery store, be sure to put your WIC produce first, before your other groceries. Pay for them with your WIC card, then put the rest of your groceries through the line.

Remember to only use your card at stores that take the WIC Fruit and Veggie Card. For a list of stores visit [www.healthvermont.gov/wic](http://www.healthvermont.gov/wic) then click on "WIC Fruit and Veggie Card."

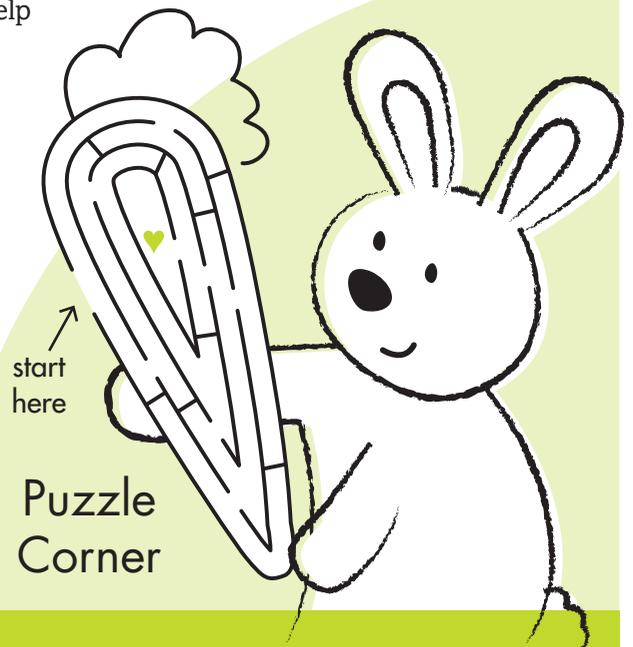
Don't lose your WIC benefits by using the card at non-WIC stores.



### Meet WIC mom: Beth from Bennington

"WIC has helped us to put food on the table during a time of downsizing and pay cuts. But WIC has also opened the door to a new world for me — working as a WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor. Breastfeeding my two sons has been one of the most fulfilling and joyful experiences of my life (and theirs, too!)."

I cherish the opportunity to help other moms to share that closeness with their own children."





## Around the seasons with nourishing foods

### Soaking grains

Just like the rain soaks the earth in spring to make plants grow, grains can use a good soaking before they are cooked to make them more digestible and unlock all the minerals inside. Soaking whole grains like oats, rice, barley, quinoa and more in the water you plan to cook them in for 7–24 hours softens the bran, breaks down hard-to-digest proteins, and makes the wonderful minerals inside more available to our bodies.

The same is true for flour made from whole grains, like whole wheat flour, buckwheat flour, cornmeal (and corn grits), and more. Some people who have trouble digesting grains find that they do better once they start soaking their grains.

I like to soak porridge grains like oats in the evening to cook for breakfast, and grains like brown rice in the morning to cook for dinner. I also make pancakes with my kids by soaking the flour overnight in yogurt. My 2-year-old loves to help me stir.

### Basic method for soaking whole grains

This is the basic method for soaking grains. The acid from yogurt (or lemon juice) helps to break down the grains, but if you don't have that, just use water.

1 cup whole grains (brown rice, oatmeal, etc.)

Warm water — the same amount you would need to cook that particular grain  
1–2 T yogurt or buttermilk, or a few drops lemon juice or vinegar (optional)

Put all into the pot you plan to use to cook the grain, and let soak for a minimum of 7 hours and up to as long as 24 hours at room temperature. If using yogurt or buttermilk put the pot in the refrigerator. Then cook as usual.

*Caroline Homan is the Food & Nutrition Education Coordinator for City Market/Onion River Co-op. She lives in Burlington with her two children, ages 5 and 2.*

## Overnight Pancakes *Caroline Homan*

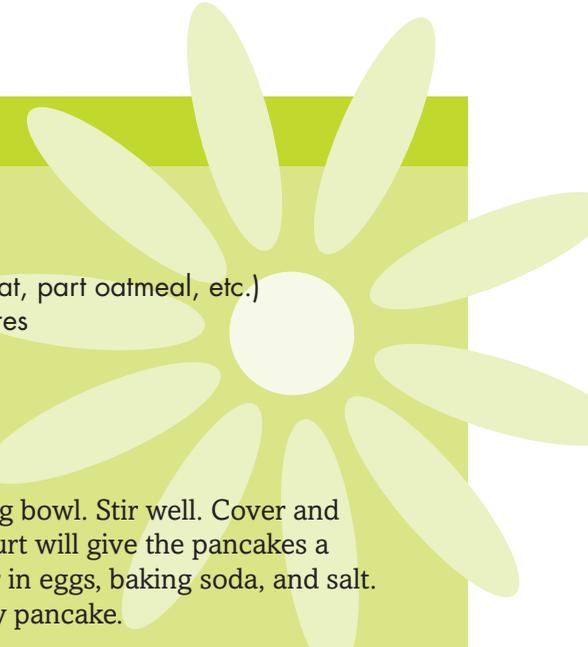
I make these pancakes for my family every week. Leftovers freeze well in a zippered bag — we simply pop them in the toaster to re-heat. We eat them with applesauce and yogurt, but maple syrup and fresh/frozen fruit in the batter or on top are also delicious.

Makes about 24 kid-size pancakes

1 cup whole wheat flour (or use part buckwheat, part oatmeal, etc.)  
1 cup plain yogurt or buttermilk with live cultures  
3 eggs  
Pinch baking soda  
Pinch salt  
Butter or cooking spray

Combine flour and yogurt in a medium mixing bowl. Stir well. Cover and put in the refrigerator overnight (the yogurt will give the pancakes a sourdough-like flavor). The next morning, stir in eggs, baking soda, and salt. Cook on a well-greased pan as you would any pancake.

Nutrient analysis per pancake: calories 33, protein 2 grams, carbohydrates 4 grams, fat 1 gram, sodium 32 milligrams, fiber 0.5 grams.





## Training for delivery

Want better sleep, stronger muscles, more energy and an easier delivery? Pregnancy shouldn't get in the way of staying fit — think of it as training for delivery!

Exercising lowers the risk of pregnancy problems like high blood pressure, gestational diabetes and depression. In short, it makes you happier and healthier. Sound good? Let's get started! But remember, always check with your doctor before starting any exercise program.

**Start slow:** As you become stronger, add 5 minutes to your daily routine. Aim for 30 minutes most days.

**Take it easy:** Walking, swimming, dancing, biking, yoga, stretching and light weight-lifting are good low-impact activities. Avoid activities with higher risk of falling and injury.

**Keep cool:** Getting too hot can be risky for the baby, so stay cool and drink plenty of fluids.

**Refuel:** Water is great but a small snack will help replenish your body after exercise. Try eating a mix of carbs, protein and fat such as a fruit and yogurt smoothie or a peanut butter and banana sandwich.



## Ask Dr. Lewis First

**Q: My doctor said my 3-year-old's BMI is above average, but that it wasn't a good thing. Is being a little heavy harmful at his age?**

**Dr. First:** Great question! In fact parents like you have been weighing me down with questions about the body mass index or what we simply refer to as BMI. The BMI is used to estimate how much fat a person has based on their height and weight.

BMI is helpful for identifying children at risk for becoming overweight as adults since the higher the BMI, the higher the percentage of fat in the body. Your child's doctor will want to prevent further increases in BMI that may occur as your child gets older.

If your child appears to be putting on the pounds due to increased fat and calories in the diet, don't despair. Work with your doctor or WIC nutritionist to come up with a nutrition and exercise plan

that will lead to improvement in the BMI. Doing so will reduce the risk of problems associated with being overweight like diabetes, high blood pressure, or heart disease. It's the trend in BMI

and not one single reading that your doctor and you should respond to. Most importantly strive to help your child eat healthy and stay active.

Hopefully this will weigh well with you and your child when it comes to knowing more about what it means to have an above average BMI.



*Dr. Lewis First is Chief of Pediatrics at Vermont Children's Hospital at Fletcher Allen Health Care.*

# WIC Newsletter • Spring

## IN THIS ISSUE:

- Ask Dr. Lewis First: No such thing as TMI when learning about BMI
- Learn about soaking grains
- Recipe: Overnight Pancakes
- Training for delivery

~Doug Larson

Spring is when you  
feel like whistling  
even with a shoe full  
of slush.

## WIC Newsletter • Spring

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